Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An optical moisture detector for measuring ambient light conditions comprising:

an optical moisture sensor having a plurality of dark pixels and a plurality of standard pixels ~~for sensing the presence of moisture on a moisture collecting surface~~, the sensor operable to emit ~~a signal~~ signals corresponding to sensed conditions at each of the plurality of dark pixels and each of the plurality of standard pixels; and

processor means for receiving the ~~signal~~ signals, for determining an absolute ambient light value corresponding to existing ambient light conditions using the signals, ~~for comparing the value to a predetermined value,~~ and for emitting a control signal if the absolute ambient light value is less than ~~the~~ a predetermined value ~~as a result of the comparison~~.

2. (Original) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 further comprising:

means, responsive to the control signal, for controlling a light generating device.

3. (Currently amended) An optical moisture detector for measuring ambient light conditions comprising:

an optical moisture sensor for sensing the presence of moisture on a moisture collecting surface, the sensor operable to emit ~~a~~ at least one signal corresponding to sensed conditions;

processor means for receiving the at least one signal, for determining an absolute ambient light value corresponding to existing ambient light conditions using the at least one signal, for comparing the value to a predetermined value, and for emitting a control signal if the absolute ambient light value is less than the predetermined value ~~as a result of the comparison~~; and

timer means for selectively disabling the processor means from comparing the absolute ambient light value to the predetermined value for a ~~predetermined~~ programmed period of time.

4. (Original) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the optical moisture sensor is operably mountable with respect to a windshield of a motor vehicle.

5. (Original) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the optical moisture sensor is operably positionable in a spaced relationship relative to a windshield of a motor vehicle.

6. (Previously amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the optical moisture sensor further comprises:

a CCD camera.

7. (Previously amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the optical moisture sensor further comprises:

a CMOS camera.

8. (Previously cancelled).

9. (Currently amended) The optical moisture detector of claim 1 wherein the processor means further comprises:

a microprocessor for operably receiving the ~~signal~~ signals from the sensor.

10. (Currently amended) An optical moisture detector for measuring ambient light conditions comprising:

an optical moisture sensor for sensing the presence of moisture on a moisture collecting surface, the sensor operable to emit ~~a~~ at least one signal corresponding to sensed conditions; and

processor means for receiving the at least one signal, for determining an absolute ambient light value corresponding to existing ambient light conditions using the at least one signal, for comparing the value to a predetermined value, and for emitting a control signal if the absolute

ambient light value is less than the predetermined value ~~as a result of the comparison~~ wherein the processing means compares the absolute ambient light value to a plurality of predetermined values such that the processing means compares the absolute ambient light value to a first predetermined value to determine if a signal to turn on a light generating device is to be sent, and compares the absolute ambient light value to a second predetermined value to determine if a signal to turn off the light generating device is to be sent.

11. (Currently amended) An optical moisture detector for measuring ambient light conditions comprising:

an optical moisture sensor having a plurality of dark pixels and a plurality of standard pixels for sensing the presence of moisture on a windshield of a vehicle, the sensor operable to emit ~~a signal~~ signals corresponding to sensed conditions at each of the plurality of dark pixels and each of the plurality of standard pixels; and

processor means for receiving the ~~signal~~ signals, for determining an absolute ambient light value corresponding to existing ambient light conditions using the signals, ~~for comparing the value to a predetermined value,~~ and for emitting a control signal if the absolute ambient light value is less than ~~the~~ a predetermined value ~~as a result of the comparison~~.

12. (Original) The optical moisture detector of claim 11 further comprising:

means, responsive to the control signal, for controlling a light generating device.

13. (Currently amended) An optical moisture detector for measuring ambient light conditions comprising:

an optical moisture sensor for sensing the presence of moisture on a windshield of a vehicle, the sensor operable to emit ~~a~~ at least one signal corresponding to sensed conditions;

processor means for receiving the at least one signal, for determining an absolute ambient light value corresponding to existing ambient light conditions using the at least one signal, for comparing the absolute ambient light value to a predetermined value, and for emitting a

control signal if the absolute ambient light value is less than the predetermined value ~~as a result of the comparison~~; and

timer means for selectively disabling the processor means from comparing the absolute ambient light value to the predetermined value for a ~~predetermined~~ programmed period of time.

14. (Currently amended) An optical moisture detector for measuring ambient light conditions comprising:

an optical moisture sensor for sensing the presence of moisture on a windshield of a vehicle, the sensor operable to emit ~~a~~ at least one corresponding to sensed conditions; and

processor means for receiving the at least one signal, for determining an absolute ambient light value corresponding to existing ambient light conditions, for comparing the absolute ambient light value to a predetermined value, and for emitting a control signal if the absolute ambient light value is less than the predetermined value ~~as a result of the comparison~~ , wherein the processor means emits the control signal only if at least two successive comparisons indicate the absolute ambient light value is less than the predetermined value.

15. (Original) The optical moisture detector of claim of claim 11 wherein the optical moisture sensor is operably mountable with respect to a windshield of a motor vehicle.

16. (Original) The optical moisture detector of claim of claim 11 wherein the optical moisture sensor is operably positionable in a spaced relationship relative to a windshield of a motor vehicle.

17. (Currently amended) A method of measuring ambient light conditions comprising:

sensing ~~the presence of moisture on a moisture collecting surface~~ an image with an optical moisture sensor having a plurality of dark pixels and a plurality of standard pixels, the

sensor operable to emit ~~a signal~~ signals corresponding to sensed conditions at each of the plurality of dark pixels and each of the plurality of standard pixels;

receiving the ~~signal~~ signals and determining an absolute ambient light value corresponding to the existing ambient light conditions with processor means using the signals;

~~comparing the value to a predetermined value with the processor means;~~ and

emitting a control signal with the processor means if the absolute ambient light value is less than ~~the~~ a predetermined value ~~as a result of the comparing step~~.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 further comprising the step of:

mounting the optical moisture sensor to the windshield of a vehicle.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17 further comprising the step of:

disposing the optical moisture sensor in a spatial relationship relative to the windshield of a vehicle.

20. (Currently amended) The method of claim 17 further comprising the step of:

controlling a light generating device ~~with controlling means~~ in response to the control signal.